

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are currently active.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-15 as being anticipated by Dobbins.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended. Antecedent support for the amendments to these claims are found on page 7, lines 10-15.

Additionally, the Examiner in their response to arguments section of the last Office Action, paragraph 3 states in (A) a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. It is respectfully submitted that with the amendments to Claims 1 and 8, structural limitations have been introduced into the claims to distinguish between the claimed invention and the prior art. Specifically, there is a first virtual network which is an MPLS network and there is a second virtual network which is an ethernet. In regard to Claim 8, structural differences in the context of the claim distinguish over the applied art of record. However, in regard to Claim 1, it is a method claim, and with a method claim, structural differences in and of themselves

are secondary, while the actual application specific steps themselves in a method claim are controlling. In a method claim, it is the application of the claimed invention between an MPLS network and an ethernet where hosts and each network both use the same IP address, that specifically distinguishes over the prior art, and it is not because of the structure but because the actual method itself.

Referring to Dobbins, there is disclosed distributed connection-oriented services for switch communications networks. Dobbins teaches a router-based, share-media network cannot provide the high bandwidth and quality of service required by the latest networking applications and new faster workstations. See column 1, lines 32-35. Switched networking is a proposed solution intended to provide additional bandwidth and quality of service. In such networks, the physical routers and hubs are replaced by switches and a management system is optionally provided for monitoring the configuration of the switches. The overall goal is to provide a scalable high-performance network where all links between switches can be used concurrently for connections. See column 1, lines 55-64.

In contrast, applicants' claimed invention focuses on, and is concerned with a system for translating IP addresses of an MPLS network to Ethernet/Mac addresses that operates correctly in the case for a networking device connected to both of these networks.

Thus, Dobbins has nothing to do with the problem and the concern that applicants' claimed invention addresses.

Dobbins teaches a network 10 has four switches, all of the switches being connected in a meshed topology by physical links between network ports forming point to point connections. See column 9, lines 10-15. The switching of packets between end systems on the same VLAN is performed by a connection-based switching engine. If the policy so provides, the engine will set up connections only for end systems having the same VLAN-ID. See column 9, lines 27-32.

Dobbins teaches a VLAN network includes a plurality of switches having network ports connected by links and a meshed topology having access ports connected to local end systems. In addition, a virtual directory may include mappings to external networks, which are connected by a router to an access switch. See column 9, lines 62-66. During a discovery time, each switch discovers its local connected end switches in order to provide a mapping of end system Mac addresses to access ports, as well as a mapping of end switch system Mac addresses to VLAN-IDs.

The end system and/or VLAN mappings may be provided by an external application. Whether the mappings at each local access switch are done implicitly by using a

mapping criteria table or protocol that specific mappings or explicitly using an external management application, a key point is that each access switch only maintains its locally attached users. Taken as a group, this combination of local directories provides the virtual directory which can easily scale to fairly large numbers of users. See column 10, lines 42-51.

As is apparent and clear from the above description of Dobbins, the focus and intent is to allow an architecture that can easily scale to fairly large numbers of users. This has nothing to do with the focus of applicants' claimed invention. Furthermore, there is no teaching or suggestion in Dobbins of "forming a request message at a first virtual networking device connected to a first virtual network, which is an MPLS network, and a second virtual network, which is an Ethernet, at a same time which share a physical link and host on each network both use a same IP address," as found in amended Claim 1. In fact, Dobbins is totally silent regarding this limitation. Moreover, there is no teaching or suggestion in Dobbins of the limitation that the "second virtual network which uses the virtual network identifier value to determine a virtual router responsible for responding to the request message," as found in amended Claim 1. Dobbins is also totally silent regarding this limitation. Accordingly, amended Claim 1 is not anticipated by Dobbins. Claims 2-7 are dependent to parent Claim 1 and are patentable for the reasons Claim 1 is patentable.

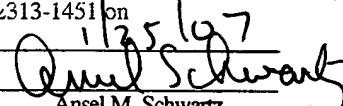
Claim 8 is patentable for the reasons Claim 1 is patentable. Claims 9-14 are dependent to parent Claim 8 and are patentable for the reasons Claim 8 is patentable.

Amended Claim 15 is patentable for the reasons Claim 1 is patentable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejections and objections to this application be reconsidered and withdrawn, and Claims 1-15, now in this application be allowed.

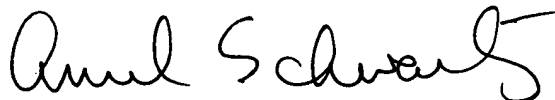
CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Trademarks, P.O. Box 1451, Alexandria, VA 22313-1451 on

11/25/97

Ansel M. Schwartz
Registration No. 30,587

Respectfully submitted,

CHASE T. TINGLEY, ET AL.

By 

Ansel M. Schwartz, Esquire

Reg. No. 30,587

One Sterling Plaza

201 N. Craig Street

Suite 304

Pittsburgh, PA 15213

(412) 621-9222

Attorney for Applicants